

Once Lost, But Now Found at Zenith Gallery!

By Rosetta DeBerardinis

Once in awhile, [Margery Goldberg](#) from [Zenith Gallery](#), a major gallerist in Washington, D.C., a dynamic woman who has far exceeded the historical curve for art galleries nationwide by celebrating its thirtieth year; exhibits work that blows your socks off. Several years ago, while working as the DC art tour guide, I recall Ms. Goldberg disclosing her criteria for selecting artists. "The work has to give me an orgasm," I recall her declaring. Figuratively of course!



Chris Malone, a mixed media artist in the current two-person exhibit "Drama Queens" with Shelly Laffel, obviously did just that. My response was not as personal as Ms. Goldberg's; however, it compelled me to view the work twice.

Malone, a self-taught D.C. artist with exceptional talent creates large-scale soft sculptures influenced by the different tribes of Africa and New Guinea. Work that is too sophisticated to be classified as "dolls." He uses soft materials, e.g. fabric, kapok rope, canvas to define his shapes from a genre made popular in the 60's by artists such as the Claus Oldenburg (Sweden) and Robert Morris (American).

Malone, reared in the Midwest, was once a zookeeper at the National Zoo, caring for the giant pandas Hsing-Hsing and Ling-Ling. He now sits and sews together pieces of fabric from Pakistan, Africa and other nations.

Colorful feathers, beads, yarns, mirrors adorn the textile surface and the extremities of the clay figures, with twinkling prosthetic eyes; twist, turn, sway, shout and even some pray with hands outstretched to the heavens.

For years, I have been in search of my ethnic past and looking to different tribes of Africa and New Guinea has brought a peace in me. - Chris Malone, from Zenith press release

This exhibit marks Chris Malone's introduction at Zenith Gallery. And, I doubt now that he's been discovered by Margery Goldberg, that he will ever be lost again.

Drama Queens through June 1st
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